



Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

Date: February 12, 2013

To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee

Subject: **Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives Study**

Recommendation:

Receive and file update on the Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives Study

Previous Directives:

- September 25, 2012 – T&PW received and filed update on the Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives Study
- May 25, 2012 – City Council authorized a contract with URS Corporation to provide professional services to conduct an alternatives analysis in the Nicollet Avenue and Central Ave corridor.
- September 23, 2011 – City Council authorized a Request for Proposals for professional services to conduct an alternatives analysis for urban circulator transit services in the Nicollet Ave and Central Ave corridor.
- June 17, 2011 – City Council authorized execution of a subrecipient agreement with the Metropolitan Council to accept a \$900,000 Federal Transit Administration grant and provide a \$300,000 local match to conduct an alternatives analysis for urban circulator transit services in the Nicollet Avenue and Central Avenue corridor.
- July 2, 2010 – City Council authorized submittal of an application for federal funding to conduct an alternatives analysis for an initial streetcar line within the Nicollet Avenue and Central Avenue corridors.
- April 2, 2010 – City Council approved the long-term streetcar network; authorized staff to engage partner agencies and private stakeholders to determine whether the City should enter into the federal project development process; and directed staff to return to T&PW Committee at least quarterly with a report on streetcars.
- March 23, 2010 – T&PW received and filed Streetcar Funding Study.
- January 22, 2008 – T&PW received and filed Streetcar Feasibility Study.

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Approved by:

Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

Presenters: Anna Flintoft, Transportation Planner

Reviews:

Permanent Review Committee (PRC):	Not Applicable
Civil Rights Affirmative Action Plan:	Not Applicable
Policy Review Group (PRG):	Not Applicable

Financial Impact

None

Community Impact

Neighborhood Notification: The study and upcoming open houses have been advertised via a press release, Facebook/Twitter postings, emails to stakeholder organizations, project email list, project website, and project advisory committee.

City Goals: CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Comprehensive Plan: Improving the quality of transit on the Primary Transit Network is consistent with the transportation goals in the Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning Code: Not Applicable

Background/Supporting Information

In late 2007, the City completed a streetcar feasibility study that identified a long-term network of seven modern streetcar corridors. In 2010, the City Council prioritized the Nicollet Avenue and Central Avenue corridors as the best place to start implementation of the long-term network and directed staff to seek grant funds to conduct an Alternatives Analysis study for the Nicollet-Central Corridor. The City was subsequently awarded a \$900,000 competitive grant from the Federal Transit Administration to conduct the Alternatives Analysis, and work on the Nicollet-Central Alternatives Study began last summer.

The study process and schedule is as follows:

- Phase I: Finalizing purpose and need and evaluation measures, completed in fall 2012;
- Phase II: Finalizing alternatives to be considered, to be completed in winter 2013;
- Phase III: Evaluation of alternatives, in spring 2013; and
- Phase IV: Selection of an LPA in summer 2013.

The first phase of the study has been completed. A summary of the public engagement and technical work for that phase of study is available on the project website:

www.minneapolismn.gov/nicollet-central.

The second phase of study is nearing completion. An initial universe of transit modes and transit alignments has been evaluated, and the following alternatives are proposed for detailed evaluation: a no build alternative (similar to existing local bus service), a modern streetcar alternative, and an enhanced bus alternative. The proposed alignment follows Nicollet Avenue S, Nicollet Mall and Central Avenue NE between 46th Street on the south and 41st Avenue NE on the north with an option to cross the Mississippi River on either the Hennepin/1st Avenue bridge or the Central/3rd Avenue bridge. (See attached project summary.)

A series of three open house meetings is scheduled to give the public an opportunity to provide input and learn about these initial alternatives and the upcoming detailed evaluation of alternatives.

- Tuesday, Feb. 12, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
MPHA Parker Skyview Community Room, 1815 Central Avenue NE
Presentation at 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 13, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
HCMC Whittier Clinic, 2810 Nicollet Avenue S
Presentation at 6 p.m.
- Thursday, Feb. 14, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall
Presentation at 4 p.m.

Attachment: Open House Poster